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ODE TO THE MOON UNDER TOTAL ECLIPSE.

(July, 1823.)

[The Moon under total eclipse is not invisible, but appears of a dark red colour.]

I.

O queen of yon ethereal plain,
 With slow majestic step advancing,
 'Mid thy attendant starry train,
 Thy subject waves beneath thee dancing ;
 As Dian moves through Delian shades
 Above her circling Oread maids :
 Why hath that crimson red
 Thy lovely brow o'erspread—
 Oh ! wherefore that portentous gloom,
 Eclipse, and shadow of the tomb ?

II.—1.

Say, is it but a passing cloud,
 Far in some higher sphere,
 Which thus around thee winds its shroud,
 While all the heavens are clear ;
 While not a vapour nigh
 Sullies the midnight sky ;
 While all the stars are brightly burning,
 Each in his wonted orbit turning ?

II.—2.

Or wizard from his murky cell
 Who bows thee to his power,
 By magic word and mutter'd spell
 In this, night's witching hour ?

II.—3.

Or is it, as the sages say,
 Versed in celestial lore,
 Our earth, athwart light's pathless way,
 Which bars it from thy shore :
 Whose shadowy cone, with noiseless pace
 Through the infinity of space,
 Hath darkly crossed thine orb on high,
 And dimmed it to our wondering eye ?

III.—1.

On thee the nations gaze
 With looks of wild amaze,
 And anxious ask, what means the sign ?
 What dread disaster nigh,
 Is boded by thine eye,
 Low'ring with aspect thus malign ?

III.—2.

For ancient tales of terror say,
 That still before some fatal day
 Thou veilest thus thy blushing face ;
 Earthquake or famine, sword or fire,
 Is menaced by that look of ire ;
 Ruin prepares to run his race :
 Lo ! in his widely whelming car,
 He comes, the demon from afar,
 Rushing with a whirlwind's noise,
 Trampling o'er prostrate hopes and joys,
 While, at his side, the ministers of fate
 In silence seem his signal to await.

III.—3.

'Twas thus, O Moon! thy failing light,
 When Athens' army thought of flight
 From that dark Sicilian shore,
 To their distant country bore
 The omen of her slaughter'd host,
 Of coming woe and glory lost.

IV.

Such augury is in thy looks to-night :
 And with awe mingled with a stern delight,
 The warrior or the poet now
 May gaze on thine ensanguined brow ;—
 But not the lover ! all too rude,
 It suits not with his milder mood ;
 Better *he* loves to look on thee
 When shining in thy purity ;
 Clad in thy robe of virgin snow,
 As thou wert an hour ago,
 Or hid by fleecy clouds alone
 That canopy yon azure throne.
 And yet, to *him* all nature seems
 Tinged with soft hues by fancy's beams,
 As distant rainbows beauty shed
 On the rugged mountain head :
 Then, though thy light be like the torch of war,
 Still will *I* hail thee as the lover's star !

W. R. H.

SONNET TO PSYCHE.

Of the bright forms that flash'd on Greece's vision
 In her day-dream of glory, when the smiles
 Of light were glowing in her blessed isles,
 And phantoms beautiful from realms elysian
 Breathed like expiring echoes through her clime ;
 Leaving the sweetness of their lingering thrill
 In murmured whisperings of former time—
 Thou wert the loveliest, and lovelier still
 To me, that one sweet child * of mournful lay,
 To whose sad spirit, upon memories sweet
 And passionate dreams to dwell was exquisite !
 Sang forth of thee in our less glorious day,
 Than that to thy caress the god of love,
 A vanquish'd conqueror left his throne above !

R. M.

* Mrs. Henry Tighe.